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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002179

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/31/2011
TAGS: NI PHUM PREL
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: U.S. PRESENCE AT DURBAN

REF: STATE 151077

(U) Classified by DCM Timothy D. Andrews. Reason: 1.5(d)

¶1. (U) DCM delivered reftel points to MFA Permanent Secretary Ambassador T.D. Hart shortly before 0700 EDT on

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Friday, August 31. Hart was aware that the Secretary would not attend; he had seen the Secretary on CNN earlier. Hart regretted that the U.S. might not participate at all and offered that Nigeria hoped circumstances would change such that U.S. attendance would be assured. Hart said he would travel to Durban "to look in" on the WCAR and then return to Nigeria late in the week. President Obasanjo was already in southern Africa and would attend.

¶2. (C) Nigeria was displeased, Hart continued, that no agreement could be reached on the Middle East language. "There is a sense in which (this language) removes focus and attention from the purpose (of the WCAR)," Hart added, emphasizing, "We did our best to restrain the Palestinians, ...but some people will use any forum to press the points near and dear to their hearts."

¶3. (C) Hart said Nigeria would use the margins to continue its efforts to find a compromise that would allow the U.S. delegation in Durban to join the WCAR. If the U.S. did not participate, it would be a "big loss" for what is "supposed to be a world conference." Nigeria felt the WCAR should look forward. It was right to redress the current impact of past injustice but not helpful to revisit the past.
Jeter